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SHEPTON MALLET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

(Including details submitted to me by the Sanitary Inspector)



For the Year Ending 31st December, 1955

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:
Γ. E. COULSON, M.D., F.R.C.S.E.

A. D. STOCKDALE

SANITARY INSPECTOR:

G. F. HAWKINS, Cert. S.I. Jt. Board, Cert R.S.I. (Meat and Other Foods). (Mr. G. F. Hawkins also holds the appointment of Surveyor).

TO THE SHEPTON MALLET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to lay before you my Annual Report for the year 1955.

1	GENER	AT.	STA	TISTICS.
				I IU I IUU.

Area (in acres)			• • •	• • •	2278
Population (1955)	• • •		• • •		5270
Number of Inhabited Houses (1955)			• • •		1740
Rateable Value, 1st. April, 1955			• • •		£31,443
Produce of Penny Rate (estimated)		• • •	* * *	• • •	£120
Number of Inhabited Houses is based on the following:	especial/filters				
Dwelling Houses		• • •	• • •		1616
Banks and Offices with Living Accommodation	• • •	• • •		• • •	6
Shops, etc., with Living Accommodation	• • •	• • •		• • •	75
Club Premises with Living Accommodation		• • •	• • •	• • •	2
Hotels and other Licensed Premises	• • •	• • •	• • •		22
Public Institutions (Hospitals, etc.)					4
Crown Properties	• • •	• • •	• • •	• • •	15
					4.57.40
	Total				1740

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

In addition to shops, offices, building trades and allied trades, the main sources of employment in the town are cider factories (2), breweries (2), shoe-making, glove factories (2), millers, bacon factory and meat products, railways (2), agricultural engineering, research chemists, general engineering (2) garages and motor engineering, dry-cleaning and dye-works, rope works, motor haulage.

There is very little unemployment other than that of a transitory nature.

2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL S	STATISTICS	OF	THE	YEAR.
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2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE	YEAR.											
Births.	•											
Live Births: Males Females												
Total 43 41												
Legitimate 41 41												
Illegitimate 2 — Still Births:— Males Females	`											
Control of the contro												
Illegitimate 0												
Deaths.												
Total Males Females												
Deaths from all causes 62 32 30												
Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of, child-birth:—												
(a) From Sepsis	0											
(b) From other causes	0											
Deaths of Infants under One Year of age:—												
Legitimate, 1, Illegitimate, 0, Total 1.	4											
Deaths of Infants under One Week	0											
from One to Four Weeks from One to Six Months	0											
from Six to Twelve Months	0											
22 22 22 22 22 22 22 22 22 22 22 22 22	Surre-tors											
Total	1											
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	0											
, Whooping Cough (all ages)	0											
" Diarrhoea (under two years of age)	C											
There has not been any excessive mortality during the year.												
The total number of deaths occuring in the District was 62 compared	with 51 in 1954											
The chief causes of death were:												
Cancer	11											
Heart and Circulatory Diseases	33											
Old Age	2											
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	10											
In all "Causes of Death":—	4.4											
Those dying between the ages of 75 and 80 were	16											
" " 81 and 85 were 86 and 90 were	8											
Those dying above the age of 90 were	10											
A total of 37 or 51.61% of the total Deaths.	* 1 * * * * * *											
11.000.00000000000000000000000000000000												

3.—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Diagona	Total Cases	Cases Admitted to	Total
Disease	Notified	Isolation Hospital	Deaths
Whooping Cough	29	0	0
Erysipelas	2	0	1
Measles	129	0	0
Dysentery	3	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	5	0	0
Scarlet Fever	2	2	0
Poliomyelitis	1	1	0
Tuberculosis:—Total	5	0	0
(a) Respiratory	5	0	0
(b) Non-Respiratory	0	0	1

The Notification of Infectious Diseases by Medical Practitioners was satisfactory.

4.—OPHTHALMIA NEONATORIUM.

No case notified.

CAUSES OF SICKNESS

Whooping Cough was prevalent during the early months of the year.

Measles was very prevalent during the whole year.

Although some of the cases were severe there were no deaths from either disease.

5.—SUMMARY OF NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE DISTRICT.

A.—PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

- (1) General: There are two Nurses in the District engaged in general district work, who are affiliated to the County Nursing Association.
- (2) For Infectious Diseases: Three cases were admitted to Isolation Hospitals, the remainder were either nursed by their relatives or by nurses obtained from Nursing Homes or Hospitals outside the District.

B.—Midwives.

There are 2 Certified Midwives practising in the District.

C .- CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

There is one Tuberculosis Dispensary in Charlton Road, provided and staffed by the County Council.

D.—Hospitals Available for the District.

- (1) Tuberculosis: None.
- (2) Fever: None.
- (3) Other: Some unused buildings in the grounds of the former Isolation Hospital have been converted into a Hospital for the aged sick.

The Cubicle block of the former Isolation Hospital has been converted into a maternity Hospital.

There is the District Hospital at Shepton Mallet for the treatment of general medical and surgical cases. There is no Public Assistance Institution, the building having been taken over by the County Council as an Institution for persons suffering from Mental Deficiency.

E.—Institutional Provision for Unmarried Mothers and Illegitimate Infants: None.

Homeless Children: Hillworth House, staffed and equipped by the Somerset County Council.

F.—Ambulance Facilities.

- (1) For Infectious Cases: None.
- (2) For Non-Infectious Cases and Accidents:—Two Motor Ambulances and one sitting case Car are kept at the Ambulance Depot, Shepton Mallet, and in cases of need, additional ambulances are obtainable through the local branch of the B.R.C.S., and also from Wells and Radstock.

G.—Scables:—No cases of Scabies have been reported to me.

6.—LABORATORY WORK.

Examinations of bacteriological and pathological specimens are carried out at The Public Health Laboratory, Bath; considerable use of this Laboratory has been made during the year.

A supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin is kept at Messrs. Boots (Chemists), and Miss Watkins (Chemist).

A supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin is kept at Messrs. Boots (Chemists), and Miss Watkins (Chemist), Supplies can be obtained from them by Practitioners on the National Health Service Prescription form

7.—PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

There is one Sanitary Inspector and Housing and Sanitary Surveyor (a whole-time officer) and myself (a part-time officer). There is one Health Vistor in the District.

8.—WATER SUPPLY.

The public water supply is operated by the Shepton Mallet Waterworks Company, and is satisfactory in quality and, execept in periods of exceptional drought, in quantity. During the past year the supply has been supplemented by water from the Shepton Mallet Rural District Council's mains at Cannards Grave, thereby avoiding the necessity of restricting the use of water other than for non-essential purposes. As a result of the prolonged spell of dry weather, the Shepton Mallet Waterworks Company issued notices early in August calling attention to the need to use economy in connection with the public water supply. Similar notices were also issued in October and early December. One Chemical sample of water treated after going into supply was satisfactory.

The water is not liable to Plumbo-solvent action.

So far as can be ascertained the houses etc., can be divided up as follows:—

Mains supplies direct to houses 1,574; Population 5,137

Mains supplies by Standpipes 34; Population 106.

Mains supplies total 1,608.

Houses supplied by wells 8; Population 27.

Estimated total number of houses in District 1,616.

Extensions or improvements of supplies during the year were as follows:—

The new reservoir at Compton Road for the Shepton Mallet Waterworks Company was completed and brought into use during the year.

In addition to the extension of their mains at Ridgeway Housing Estate, the Company laid new trunk mains from Downside via Cowl Street, Longbridge and Lower Lane to Leg Square and from Ridgeway Housing Estate via Kent and West Shepton Road to Old Wells Road.

Future proposals are that the Shepton Mallet Waterworks Company are expected to consider in the near future the necessity or otherwise of proceeding with the proposal to construct an additional reservoir at Windsor Hill, Downside. Future housing developments, both public and private may necessitate further extensions of the existing mains.

Two industrial premises (a Bacon Factory and a Brewery) have private wells in addition to mains supply, also boring has been carried out and further investigations are in hand at a third premises with a view to supplementing the public supply.

9.—SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

Most of the premises in the Urban District are connected to the public sewers discharging to treatment works at Darshill, but approximately 70 properties in out-lying parts of the area are not connected to the main drainage system.

Extensions of sewers were carried out during the year in connection with the development of the Council's Ridgeway Housing Estate.

For the future the Council's Consulting Engineers have submitted revised modified proposals for the modernisation, adaptation, improvement and enlargement of the sewage treatement works in order to deal efficiently with the continually increasing flow. In December 1955 notification was received from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government that the revised proposals had been approved in principal.

10.—CLOSET ACCOMODATION.

Estimated number of dwelling-houses, etc.:—with W.C.'s 1,586.
with Pail Closets 30.

11.—PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The existing arrangements for the collection and disposal of household and trade refuse have been continued. A weekly collection is made of all premises in the District, this work is carried out by contract, a Karrier C.K.3 model 10 cubic yard covered refuse collection vehicle with hydraulic tipping being used.

As regards trade refuse, the Council make a charge, in normal cases, on the basis of 5% of the rateable value of the trade premises and for this payment collect trade refuse on two additional days per week. In the case of a large shoe factory, special arrangements have been made for the removal and disposal of their trade refuse, the actual cost being recovered from the occupiers of the premises.

The whole of the refuse is disposed of by tipping on the controlled system, at a disused quarry at Winsor Hill, Downside, Shepton Mallet; except that some trade refuse and waste paper are incinerated. The collection of waste paper continued throughout the year.

12.—CAMPING SITES. There are none in the District.

13.—PUBLIC SWIMMING BATHS AND POOL.

There is one Swimming Pool at Eastfield in the Urban District owned by the Council. The water is continually circulated, filtered and chlorinated. The temperature of the water is maintained at about 70 deg. F. (minimum).

The type of purification plant is the Horseley Piggott with a Wallace & Tiernan Automatic Chlorinator.

The water was regularly tested, at both inlet and outlet for residual chlorine and pH value. The turnover period is estimated to be approximately 12 hours. The pool is filled from the mains of the Shepton Mallet Waterworks Company.

The daily number of bathers fluctuates considerably, mainly on account of climatic conditions; the estimated maximum daily load is 400 persons, including a large proportion of children.

14.—HOUSING.

14.—noosing.	¥
Total number of permanent dwellings in District	1616 345
Part 1. The total problem (As per Ministry Circular 55/54):— (1) Estimated number of houses unfit for human habitation within the meaning of Section 9 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, and suitable for action under Section 11 or Section 25 of the Housing Act, 1936 (11) Period in years which the Council think necessary for securing the demoli-	190
tion of all the houses in (1)	10
Part 2. Orders already made, etc.:—	
(111) Number of houses in (1) in clearance areas and already covered by operative clearance or compulsory purchase orders or owned by the Local Authority (IV) Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clear-	Nil
ance or compulsory purchase orders have been submitted to the Minister but have not yet become operative	Nil
Part 3. Action in the first five years:—	,
(V) Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clearance or compulsory purchase orders are to be made or which are to be purchased by agreement within the five years	5
(VI) Number of houses which are to be included in clearance areas still to be declared and which within the five years will be owned by the Local Authority or will have been included in a clearance order or a compulsory	
purchase order submitted to the Minister	70
(VII Number of houses under (III), (IV), (V) and (VI) to be patched (if necessary) and retained within the five years under Section 2 of the Housing Repairs	
and Rents Act, 1954, for temporary accommodation	Nil
(VIII) Number of houses under (III), (IV), (V) and (VI) to be demolished in the five years	75
(IX) Number of houses (including those already comprised in operative demolition orders) to be demolished in the five years as a result of action under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936	7 5

	Houses erected during year	Houses in course of erection at 31.12.55	Gained from conversion of large houses or buildings into flats or dwellings	Lost from conversion of two or more houses to one
Local Authority Private Enterprise	1.0	22 3	Nil 3	Nil, but see below
Totals	. 43	25	3	Nil

Four units of dwellinghouses were lost as a result of changes of user from houses to business premises.

Number of Post-War Houses erected from 1.4.45 to 31.12.55:—

By Local Authority 220. By Private Enterprise 62.

Housing Programme for 1956 (Local Authority) 74.

(a) Number of temporary units occupied: (I) Prefabs. Nil. (II) Huts etc., Nil.

(b) Number of houses found overcrowded 1

- (c) Number of houses closed as a result of an undertaking given by the owners or following the issue of Closing Orders 1.
- (d) Number of houses demolished during the year 4.
- (e) Number of houses made fit during the year 4.

Houses Required:—

- (I) To abate overcrowding 1.
- (II) To overcome unsatisfactory conditions (not included in (I) 72.

Total number of applicants for Council Houses at the end of the year 191.

Summary of applicants for houses:—

Families living in unsanitary conditions 37. Families living in shared accommodation 35.

Families with insufficient bedroom accommodation 12.

Applicants for Old Persons bungalows (Local residents) 20, (Outside district) 7.

Applicants living in overcrowded houses 1.

Local applicants for reasons other than the above 27. Applicants by persons living outside the district 52.

15.—IMPROVEMENT GRANTS MADE UNDER THE HOUSING ACTS 1949-54.

No. of applications and houses dealt with by Local Authority:—

	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)			(5)
	Received		Approved		Rejected		Under consideration		Withdrawn	
	Aps.	No. of houses	Aps.	No. of houses	Aps.	No. of houses	Aps.	No. of houses	Aps.	No. of houses
31.7.49— 31.12.54	2	2	1	1	1	1				
During year	10	14	5	6	1	1	4	7		
TOTALS	12	16	6	7	2	1	4.	7		

Note: The figures in columns 1 and 4 include an application to convert four 1-bedroom almshouses into two 2-bedroom ditto.

Average cost per dwelling approved: £698 (based on 7 units of accommodation).

Average rent fixed: £78 (based on 5 units) per annum exclusive of rates.

The average amount of grant approved, based on 7 units of housing accommodation, was £338. The average rental is rather high owing to the fact that the premises in respect of which grants for improvements have been approved include a rectory and a farmhouse.

Restriction of tenants to adults only.

It is taken for granted that, in the present financial position in which the country finds itself, every house that can be saved should be saved. During the carrying out of my duties of house inspection I occasionally come across houses well built and watertight but lacking essential amenities and with restricted bedroom accommodation and therefore obviously unsuitable for a family of children, but which, at a reasonable expense, could be made fit for a childless couple. Owing to the fact that the Council have no powers to restrict the tenancy to persons without children (except in cases of gross overcrowding) a house of this sort may be lost. I am of the considered opinion that, in the case of a house such as described above the Council should have the power to restrict the tenancy to a couple without children.

16.—**FOOD**.

MILK

(a) No. of Registered Distributors	6						
(b) No. of Registered Dairy Premises (other than Dairy Farms)	6						
(c) No. of Licensed Dealers of Designated Milk	5.						
(d) No. of supplementary licences issued to distributors whose dairy is outside							
your area 2. Issued to one dairyman for (a) T.T. and (b) Pastuerised	milks.						

Designated Milk Sampling:

Designation	Samples Taken	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Tuberculin Tested	Nil	<u>—</u>	
Sterilised	Nil		-
Pasteuriscd	Nil	_	

Biological Sampling: Nil.

There are at present five local registered dairymen, (one of whom has two premises), and one outside the district who supplies the Council Schools. All dairymen are licensed to retail pasteurised and tuberculin tested milk, four of the dairymen obtaining their supplies already bottled from the same wholesale dealer.

ICE CREAM

Number of premises registered for:

O DI O	r promised roo	101010	- 2011							
(a)	Manufacture	and	retail		 			a e e	• • •	1
(b)	Manufacture	only		 	 	* * •	W 0 W			Nil
(c)	Retail only									16

In practically all cases, supplies of ice cream are obtained in cartons or wrapped from well-known manufacturers.

In addition to registered premises, ice cream is also sold by many restaurants, hotels etc., and at the local Cinema.

17.—SLAUGHTER-HOUSES AND BACON FACTORIES.

None owned or leased by Local Authority

(a) Private slaughter-houses	• • •	• • •		• • •	Licensed 1; Operating	1.
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(b) Bacon Factories Licensed 1; Operating 11.

There are no slaughter-houses in use where horses are slaughtered for human conconsumption.

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during year:

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses	
Number killed (if known)	372	280	251	1162	933		
Number inspected	356	276	243	1111	917		
All diseases except Tuber- culosis and Cysticerci. Whole carcases condemned			3	3	1		
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	104	98	2	229	79		
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	29.2	. 35.5	2.06	20.9	8.7		
Tuberculosis only Whole carcases condemned	3	6		water-dual-relationship states and relationship states are states and relationship states are states and relationship states are states as the states are s	1		
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	21	41			22		
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	6.74	17.0			2.51	*	
Cysticercosis Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned		1					
Carcases submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration		1					
Generalised and totally condemned		_					
Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for:— (a) Tuberculosis (b) Cysticercosis (c) Other Total (in lbs.) condemned	The total weight of condemned meat and offals amounted to approx. 14,403 lbs. Separate records of weights are not kept for each class of animal nor for each group of disease(s). The above particulars are in respect of the only private slaughterhouse operating in the Urban District.						

The Council do not undertake meat inspection at the Bacon Factory in their area. The owner-occupiers have therefore instituted a system of initial examination of carcases and offal by their own employees and any diseased or abnormal carcases etc. are detained for detailed inspection by veterinary officers, whose services are paid for entirely by the owner-occupiers of the factory. During the year 1955, the number of pigs slaughtered at the Bacon Factory was 53,587. The total estimated weight of condemned meat and organs amounted to 91,513 lbs., (exclusive of the weight of 2,373 sets of intestines). The condemnations included 323 whole carcases, the majority of which were presumably diseased with generalised tuberculosis.

18.—FOOD PREMISES.

Number of premises registered under Sec. 14, Food and Drugs Act, 1938 ... 8

19.—BYELAWS UNDER SECTION 15 OF THE FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938.

Date Byelaws came into operation—11th December, 1950. No special action taken other than routine inspection of food premises.

20.—FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

PART I OF THE ACT

1.—Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors.)

•			Number of				
Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number on Register (3)	Inspections (4)	Written notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)	line No.	
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities*	1	34	61	1		1	
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	2	29	7			2	
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority * (excluding out-workers' premises)	3	3	5			3	
Total		66	73	1	_		

2.—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

(If defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasions they should be reckoned as two, three or more "cases".)

·	M/c	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which	M/c
Particulars		Found	Remedied		rred By H.M. Inspector	prosecutions were instituted	line No.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	. 4						4
Overcrowding (S.2)	. 5	_				, —	5
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	. 6						6
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	. 7		<u>.</u>				7
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	. 8						8
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)— (a) Insufficient	. 9	_	J				9
(b) Unsuitable or defective	. 10						10
(c) Not separate for sexes	. 11						11
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	10	1		-			12
TOTAL	. 60	1		_			60

PART VIII OF THE ACT OUTWORK

	S	ection 11	0	S				
Nature of Work	M/c line No.	out-workers in August list required	default	prosecu- tions for failure to	No. of instances of work in unwhole-some premises	Notices served	Prosecu- tions	M/c line No.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Wearing Making, etc	13	13	1					13
apparel Cleaning and washing	14							14

21.—KNACKERS YARDS.

Number registered in district Nil

22.—FOOD POISONING OUTBREAKS.
None

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen, ...

Your obedient servant,

T. E. COULSON, M.D., F.R.C.S.E. Medical Officer of Health.